

SCIAENA NIBE JORDAN & THOMPSON, 1911 (PISCES):  
PROPOSED CONSERVATION OF THE SPECIFIC NAME NIBE  
BY USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS. Z.N.(S.) 2226

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In a revision of the Indo-West Pacific SCIAENIDAE (Trewavas, 1977, *Trans. zool. Soc. Lond.*, vol. 33: 253–541) the name *Atrobuca nibe* (Jordan & Thompson, 1911) has been used for a well-known and economically important fish of Chinese and Japanese seas, in spite of it being a junior synonym of *Pseudolithus brunneolus* Jordan & Richardson, 1909. This follows usage extending over sixty-six years, and I am now asking the Commission to suppress the senior name.

2. *P. brunneolus* was established by Jordan & Richardson, 1909 (A catalog of the fishes of the island of Formosa. *Mem. Carnegie Mus.*, vol. 4: 191, pl. 71), from specimens landed in Formosa (Taiwan). It is stated by K.Y. Chu, 1956 (: 23), under its later name, to be the most abundant sciaenid species in coastal waters of Taiwan.

3. *Sciaena nibe* was established by Jordan & Thompson, 1911 (A review of the sciaenoid fishes of Japan. *Proc. U.S. natn. Mus.*, vol. 39: 258, fig. 4), from specimens landed at Wakanoura, Japan.

4. The name *brunneolus* has been mentioned (to my knowledge) only twice since the original description, first when J.F.T. Chen (1952: 373) in his 'Check-list of the species of fishes known from Taiwan (Formosa)' listed it with a query in the synonymy of *Argyrosomus nibe*; and second when K.Y. Chu (1956: 23) placed it at the end of the synonymy of *A. nibe*.

5. Published uses of the name *nibe* in various generic combinations, but for the same species, are:

JORDAN, D.S. & HUBBS, C.L. 1925. Record of fishes obtained by David Starr Jordan in Japan, 1922. *Mem. Carnegie Mus.*, vol. 10: 243.

LIN, S.Y. 1935. Notes on some important fishes in China. *Bull. Chekiang prov. Fish. Exper. Sta.*, vol. 1: 19, fig. 10.

MATSUBARA, K. 1937. Sciaenoid fishes found in Japan and its adjacent waters. *J. Imp. Fish. Inst.*, vol. 32: 52, figs. 19–22, table 6. (A full taxonomic treatment with variation based on large samples).

- TANG, D.S. 1937. Sciaenoid fishes of China. *Amoy mar. biol. Bull.* vol. 2: 67.
- LIN, S.Y. 1938. Further notes on sciaenid fishes of China. *Lingnan Sci. J.*, vol. 17: 367.
- MATSUI, J. & TAKAI, T. 1951. Ecological studies on the black croaker, *Nibea nibe* (Jordan & Thompson). *Contr. Shimonoseki Coll. Fish.* 1951: 125–143, figs. 1–10.
- CHEN, J.T.F. 1952. Check-list of the species of fishes known from Taiwan (Formosa) (continued). *Q. J. Taiwan Mus.*, vol. 5: 330.
- CHU, K.Y. 1956. A review of the sciaenoid fishes of Taiwan. *Rep. Inst. Fish. Biol. Taipei*, vol. 1(1): 23, pl. 2, fig. 1.
- CHU, Y.T., LO, Y.L. & WU, H.L. 1963. *A study on the classification of the sciaenoid fishes of China, with description of new genera and species.* pp. i-ii, 1–100, pls. 1–40. Shanghai Fisheries College. [Reprinted 1972 Antiquariaat Junk, Lochem, Netherlands.] *A. nibe* is described on pp. 64 and (English) 94, figs. 37, 63, 89, and is made type of a new genus, *Atrobucca*.
- KAMOHARA, T. 1964. Revised catalogue of fishes of Kochi Prefecture, Japan. *Rep. Usa mar. biol. Sta.*, vol. 11: 50.
- TANIGUCHI, N. 1969-70. Comparative osteology of the sciaenid fishes from Japan and its adjacent waters. I. Neurocranium. *Jap. J. Ichth.*, vol. 16 (1969): 55–67, 8 text-figs. II. Vertebrae. *ibidem*: 153–156, 1 text-fig. III. Premaxillary and dentary. *ibidem*, vol. 17 (1970): 135–140, 3 text-figs.
- MOHAN, R.S. Lal, 1972. A synopsis to the Indian genera of the fishes of the family Sciaenidae. *Indian J. Fish.*, vol. 16: 82–98.
- TALWAR, P.K. & SATHIARAJAN, R. 1975. A new bathyal fish, *Atrobucca trewavasae* (Pisces, Sciaenidae) from the Bay of Bengal. *J. nat. Hist.*, vol. 9: 575–580.
6. After the original descriptions, the species has only once been described or referred to from Chinese or Japanese waters by any other name than *nibe*, namely by Wang, 1935 (*Contr. Lab. Sci. Soc. China*, vol. 10: 393–481), in his study of teleost fishes. In this work Wang established *Nibea pingi* for it under the impression that he had an undescribed species. Specimens caught in Indian waters have been misidentified by Dutt & Thankam, 1968, as *Otolithes ruber* (Schneider, 1801); and by Talwar & Joglekar, 1972, as *Argyrosomus argentatus* (Houttuyn).
7. I have considered whether it would be better to ask for *Sciaena nibe* to be given nomenclatural precedence over *Pseudotolithus brunneolus* or to ask that the latter name be suppressed, and have concluded that the latter course would be preferable. My

reasons for this are:—

(a) In the course of a comprehensive revision of the Indo-Pacific SCIAENIDAE I have examined the holotype and one paratype of *Pseudotolithus brunneolus* (now housed in the Field Museum, Chicago) and have compared them with a topotype of *Sciaena nibe* and with the very thorough original description of that nominal species and consider that there can be no reasonable doubt of their specific identity.

(b) The only two authors to have mentioned the name *brunneolus* since its proposal have considered it a synonym of *nibe*, but have preferred to use the latter.

(c) Many zoologists, especially those working in applied fields and on fishery statistics, would not readily appreciate the subtleties of the 'relative precedence' procedure.

8. To sum up:

(a) The specific name *brunneolus* has not been used as a valid name since it was established in 1909.

(b) The younger name for the species, *nibe*, has been used over a period of 66 years in four taxonomic papers, several less comprehensive and one major ecological work as well as in fishery statistics.

(c) The species, under the name *nibe*, has been made the type of a valid genus, *Atrobucca* Chu, Lo & Wu, 1963.

(d) The species is economically important.

9. I therefore request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *brunneolus* Jordan & Richardson, 1909, as published in the binomen *Pseudotolithus brunneolus*, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology: *nibe* Jordan & Thompson, 1911, as published in the binomen *Sciaena nibe*;
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology: *brunneolus* Jordan & Richardson, 1909, as published in the binomen *Pseudotolithus brunneolus*, and suppressed by use of the plenary powers in (1) above.